

NSC DRAFTING

1 October 1958

State Department review completed

TAIWAN STRAIT

Conf. Statement, 30 Sept. press

* II Aside from US-Nat. acts involved in Secy's 30 Sept. press

I. There has been little change in political aspects of Taiwan Strait situation during past week.

A. Chinese Communists are standing pat. Their public statements give impression they believe pressure in free world is building up against US position.

B. Soviets have given no hint they plan to raise Strait issue in UN at this time.

1. Soviet newspapers have, however, placed new stress on seating of Communist China in UN as "only solution" to Taiwan Strait crisis and have even asserted this is the prerequisite for "averting war."

2. Communists may be waiting for further build-up of tension before making their move in UN. Ambassador Ledge is apprehensive that several UN members (especially in Latin America) may cease backing the US if issue becomes one of "war or peace."

C. Chinese Nationalists continue their opposition to any concessions to Communists. Improvement in Chinmen supply picture (evoked by offshore island sit. itself) has lessened pressures in Taipei for unilateral action against mainland.

II. Chinese Communists, Nationalists, and Russians all apparently waiting further developments in Chinmen blockade situation.

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Should not memo include, as a Rep. Reaction, a brief acct of Nat. reactions thru far to Secy. Dulles' 30 Sept. remarks? felt that this does collect [redacted] in the pol. aspects. Also, what does this code for US-Nat. acts, + for [Continued next p.]

- A. Supply deliveries improved during last week, but average daily totals still below minimum requirements of garrison. (Daily average last week 175 tons, previously was 160 tons; minimum requirement 300 tons daily.) Taiwan Defense Command confident, however, minimum totals can soon be supplied.
1. Bad weather, which will continue through winter, forced cancellations convoys three days last week.
 2. As of 30 September food stocks on Chincans totaled 36 days and ammunition stocks 29 days.

III. Chincans have made no new moves to tighten blockade. However, as supply picture brightens and Nationalist air force continues its excellent performance, Chincans may come to believe their negotiating position has been weakened and decide to up military stakes. Among measures open to them are:

- A. Intensification of artillery interdiction. Latest photo intelligence shows 150 new gun positions opposite Chincans, making a total of about 1,000 positions, not all occupied. (Now about 570 guns there.)

- B. Mining of sea approaches. We have no evidence that Chincans considering this course, but we think it is a possibility.

- C. Air attacks against sea and air supply lines.

1. So far, Communist aircraft have made no attacks on convoys.

3.4(c) 1949

Shenn

↓
Still 2
pg. 2
this
thrust

↓
See our
remarks
on last p.

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Chances of unilateral Nat. action? [FE, OAE given; US in for a period of greater sensitivity + protection of Nat. Chances of Nat. indep. action are somewhat low. As to date, this is not likely in immediate future.]

3. So far, one Nationalist transport plane has been lost to antiaircraft fire, none to fighters.

D. Communists could also increase pressure by more direct action such as seizure of Tatan and Ebrtan.

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K. Communists could begin operations against hitherto untested Matsus--interdiction or attack.

F. Finally, Chicom could make frontal assault on Chiann itself, but this seems unlikely at present.

IV. Before taking any direct action, however, we think Chicom would want to improve performance of their air force.

A. We noted last week that there is evidence of high-performance aircraft operating in Strait area (possibly MIG-19--FARMER) but no such aircraft have been used in combat.

B. Chicom might also want to use better pilots.

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1. US embassy in Moscow cites first indications in Soviet press that Soviet air force personnel being prepared psychologically for "volunteer" service in Far East.

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C. Chinat use of Sidewinder missile has provoked a strong propaganda reaction from Peiping, and may result in Chicom use of similar Soviet-made weapons.

1. Peiping calls Chinat use "criminal action" and promises "punitive blows" against Chinat air force.

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V. Chinese Communists also continue their numbered warnings against US armed "provocations" (18th was issued on 20 September). Make no threat of counter-action, but we suspect Chicom may be considering one or more of the courses listed above with the object of:

- A. Increasing pressure on US in Warsaw talks and/or,
- B. Provoking unilateral Chinat action which would give the Communist bloc a case to take to the UN.

VI. But, "considering" doesn't necessarily mean They'll do This. This is a possibility, though we continue to judge that C.C. pressure will remain about as have been for some time.

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This briefing note repeats yesterday's performance: i.e., ticking off capabilities plus above it TV - we "suspect" that They are considering. Not effect of this briefing is an est. of [] + State? view that C.C. pressure may slacken in time. [] 3 shades of est. on C.C.'s.

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